Pink and Blue Discrimination

by Penn

Once upon a time certain, on April 09, 1936, twin daughters were born to Dorothy "Marita" Forrant Blackledge and her handsome and hard-working husband of two years, Allan. The birth occurred at Georgetown Hospital in the Washington, D.C. area.

Twin one, Patricia Ann, crowned first at 5 pounds minus, followed by twin two, Penelope Sue at 4 pounds plus, who arrived ass-backwards and five minutes later.

According to practice of the time, the "premature" babies were placed into incubators. If kept too long with exposure to extra oxygen, some preemies experienced loss of sight. Luckily, the girls today are not short-sighted.

Mother Dorothy later said that the birth was easy because she was thankfully knocked out by meds. In reality, over nine pounds of babies took a tiny toll on her 30 year old body which caused her slight incontinence and a closet filled with protective pads for the remainder of her earthly days.

Mother gave motherhood a full-on run for its money. She not only followed Doctor Spock's rules already in social play, but whatever were missing, she created. Despite the challenge of one inverted nipple, Mother diligently and painstakingly breast fed her firstborns, placed them inside bassinets, one with pink trim, the other blue, and saw to it that their tiny fists were securely cuffed in order to deter thumb sucking and later crooked teeth. Braces could be expensive.

In order to ID her twinnies, Patsy became the blue twin while Penny was designated the pink twin. [A warning to the reader: It's best not to color code your babes nor number your boys because they will surely later whine in their family histories that the practice is archaic if not plain discriminatory].

The blue and pink branding continued as the twins grew into strollers and beyond. For some obscure reason, the harnesses Mother strapped on their small toddler bodies for outings at the park bore no color distinction, but everything else in their world did. People began to think that blue Patsy was a boy and that pink Penny was the girl twin. Of course, they were half right.

The little ones eventually became aware of the continual and vicious color distinction which only sharpened their competitive spirits. This erupted full blown, much to Mother's shock and chagrin, when Granddaddy visited one Christmas. He brought each twin a large package, one tied in pink ribbon, the other with blue. Each box held a soft fuzzy Snuggle doll which could even unzip along the back like a pillow and hold pajamas.

Upon tearing open their presents, the girls saw immediately that one doll was pink, the other, blue. Instantaneously, both wanted the blue Snuggle doll. (Or was it the pink?) In any case, one wanted what the other one wanted and vice versa. Nothing else would suffice. Their un-

Christmasy outcries quickly erased the kindly smile from Granddaddy's face, who had travelled all the way from Nebraska, for Heaven's Sake. Mother was sick at heart that her girls were not appreciative nor thankful, even at four years of age. Where was Daddy?
No doubt hiding in the kitchen.

Mother solved the boisterous dilemma by determining that NO ONE would receive a doll. (She had yet to read in the Bible that King Solomon suggested cutting the baby in half to appease the warring mothers). Mother snatched up both dolls, plopped them back into their respective pink and blue-ribboned boxes, and exited the room to put them "away." This was a devastating turn of events because it made everyone unhappy: the twins, Granddaddy, Mother, and probably Daddy, no doubt observing nearby. Even the lights on the Christmas tree dimmed.

The Pink and Blue color discrimination must have eased up for a while after Granddaddy's visit, because by the time the twins had their tonsils removed (a no-longer recognized medical practice to prevent colds and sore throats) at age five, they both recovered in adjoining hospital cribs. As a "sick" present, each received a furry black and white panda bear. Around its neck, each bear wore a bright red ribbon.

The Twins Uncolorized